



Pearson

Policy Tracker – Keeping track of what happened in the world of education in January 2016



Main talking points

One month into a new year and the new agenda is well under way, taking in: school performance, the EBacc, apprenticeship volumes, HE reform, safe guarding and life skills. It's all here.

Key headlines from the month

- School admissions process. Government prepares to consult on a more transparent system
- KS2. Government prepares to pilot multiplication tests for 11 yr olds this summer
- Exams. The Joint Council confirms the position on summer exams ahead of Ramadan
- GCSE, AS, A levels. Latest listing for 2016 teaching published
- EBacc. 36.2% of pupils in all schools entered in 2015 according to league tables
- AS levels. New UCAS survey shows continuing support as part of curriculum balance
- Teacher's pay. Unions express concerns in a joint letter to the Review Body
- Teachers. TeachFirst launches a new career-switchers campaign
- RSCs. Education Committee raises concerns about management of the school system
- Schools financial health and efficiency. The DfE launches a new efficiency metric
- Counter-extremism. Government launches a new website
- Mentoring. PM announces a new scheme
- Careers. Jobcentre Plus advisers start working with schools
- Work experience. Government prepares new plan to help disadvantaged youngsters
- 16-19 funding. EFA confirms stable rates for 2016/17
- Adult skills funding. SFA publish latest rates and rules for 2016/17
- Functional Skills. The ETF launches the first stage of its review
- ESOL. PM announces new £20m Community Fund
- Area Reviews. BIS announces the listings for wave 3
- Traineeships. Rules changed to allow other providers to offer from Feb
- Apprenticeship levy. The CBI sets out four guiding principles
- Apprenticeship Delivery Board. Government announces names
- Skilled Workers. Migration Committee proposes new employer skills levy
- Learning and Work Institute. Launched out of the merger of NIACE and CESI
- AELP. Chief Exec Stewart Segal to leave in April



Pearson

- UCAS. Latest data reveals gender gaps in certain subjects
- Personal (UCAS) Statements. Sutton Trust calls for clearer criteria and support
- Top Graduate recruitment. Up again this year according to High Fliers research
- Maintenance grants. Government votes through transition to loans

Reports/Publications of the month (in order of publication)

- **GCSE, AS and A level reform in England.** A House of Commons Library Briefing Paper explains what's been going on over the last five years
- **Response to the Higher Education Green Paper.** The HE Policy Institute brings together a range of 'experts' to offer their thoughts as consultation on the Green Paper closes
- **Apprenticeship Statistics: England 1996-2015.** Another Briefing Paper from the House of Commons Library this time presenting apprenticeship stats by Parliamentary constituency
- **Educational Inequalities in England and Wales.** The Social Market Foundation launches its new Commission into Educational Inequality by examining data and trends over recent years
- **School efficiency metric.** The DfE publishes further guidance on its 'efficiency measurement' tool designed to help schools gain efficiencies
- **A Legal Bind.** The think tank IPPR calls for a new binding legal framework for Academies that can balance autonomy with accountability as the numbers grow
- **Education in England: progress and goals.** The thinktank Centre Forum gets together with Education DataLab to propose more ambitious standards and to consider ways of measuring
- **Trends Shaping Education 2016.** The OECD publishes another heavy listing this time of trends such as globalisation, new technology and family matters, likely to shape education this year
- **Review of Tier 2.** The Migration Advisory Committee publishes its report into Tier 2 migration calling for the introduction of an Immigration Skills Charge and higher salary application
- **The role of Regional Schools Commissioners.** The Education Committee pulls few punches in a report citing a lack of transparency, accountability and coherence in current arrangements
- **Improving information in identifying children missing education.** The DfE consults on ways of co-ordinating information when a child drops off the school register
- **FE and Skills Statistical First Release.** BIS and the SFA crunch the data on learner participation, apprenticeships, English/maths for the first quarter of the 2015/16 academic year
- **School, College 2015 performance tables.** The final set of performance data before the switch in 2016 to Attainment and Progress 8 reveals a fairly stable picture of progress and trends
- **Consultation on Apprenticeship Targets for Public Sector Bodies.** Government launches consultation on a 2.3% target for larger public sector bodies
- **Progression Pathways.** UCAS reports on the growing diversity of routes, esp BTECs, into UKHE
- **Building Skills for All. A Review of England.** The OECD's latest review of adult basic skills underlines continuing weakness among the younger generation and the need for a new focus
- **Employer Skills Survey '15.** UKCES point to significant rise in vacancies caused by skills deficit



Pearson

Speeches of the month

- David Cameron's 11 January 'Life Chances' **speech** sets out four principles, including mentoring and support in schools, likely to form the basis of a forthcoming Life Chances Strategy
- Nick Clegg's 12 January Social Market Foundation **speech** helps launch a new Commission on Inequality in Education which the former Lib-Dem leader will chair for the Foundation
- David Cameron's 18 January communities speech pledges a new fund to teach English to isolated Muslim women and help bring communities together
- Sir Michael Wilshaw's 18 January CentreForum **speech** cites improved leadership, oversight, partnership and vocational education as key ingredients of an improved school system
- Nicky Morgan's 19 January counter-extremism **speech** announces a range of measures including a new website to help schools and parents protect children from radical views
- Nicky Morgan's 20 January BETT **speech** presents technology as a supplement rather than a substitute for good teaching and assessment
- Nicky Morgan's 21 January character symposium **speech** exudes government enthusiasm
- Nick Gibb's 26 January Key **speech** emphasises the importance of school leadership
- Jo Johnson's 27 January CASE **speech** confirms the government's commitment to science and research and outlines some additional funding

Quotes of the month

- *"We remain on the long walk to a greater Britain."* The Prime Minister's New Year message sketches out the long and winding road
- *"Your dreams are our dreams."* The Prime Minister offers hope to those with poor life chances
- *"If 2015 was the year for setting out our economic plan, 2016 is the year for delivery of it."* The Chancellor stresses the need to press on
- *"Like pass the parcel, you tear away one layer of wrapping paper only to find another underneath."* Nick Clegg on how deep inequality of opportunity often runs
- *"Maths is a non-negotiable of a good education."* The Education Secretary defends the new times tables tests for 11 year olds
- *"Some of the big beasts of the current educational jungle are due to leave the forest."* Prominent blogger and head teacher Geoff Barton on what lies ahead in 2016
- *"Let the SLT take over the teaching of someone for a day so they can have a focused observation of another's teaching."* One of a dozen CPD ideas from Sir Tim Brighouse

Word or phrase of the month

- *'Bucket list.'* A list of things still left to do

Steve Besley

Head of Policy @SteveBesley